REMARKS

Claims 1, 3-6, and 8-17 are pending in the patent application. The Examiner rejected the claims as amended based on 35 USC 112. Applicant has removed the term "ever" from the claims. The Examiner has rejected Claims 1, 3, 5-6, 10-11, 13 and 15-16 under 35 USC 102 as anticipated by Stefik; Claims 4, and 14 under 35 USC 103 as unpatentable over Stefik in view of Burgess; Claims 8 and 12 under 35 USC 103 as unpatentable over Stefik in view of Salas; Claim 9 as unpatentable over Stefik and Salas in view of Peters; and Claim 17 as unpatentable over Stefik in view of Peters.

The present application teaches and claims a system and apparatus for automatically determining, updating, and indicating user access status for each of a plurality of users of collaborative groupware software. The user access status indicates, for every user, one of "read", "not read", and "changed" for each user of each document and is viewable by all of the users of the groupware. The invention includes means and steps for tracking user access status and displaying the user access status for every user in a status row bar in a view window at the display of each user of each document of the groupware. All users of the groupware can check the user status for all other users of each of the

documents accessible via the collaborative groupware software. All of the independent claims have again been amended to highlight the distinctions over the cited art.

The primary reference cited is the Stefik patent. Stefik teaches a system and method whereby a small-scale representation of shared data is viewable by user who have access to that shared data. As illustrated in Fig. 1, small-scale representations of shared bodies of data A, B, C and D are depicted on a user's screen. The small-scale representations are not readable version of the documents, but are simply icons. If there is current activity relative to a document of the shared data, the activity is somehow indicated, for example by shading or blinking the small-scale representation of that document.

Stefik expressly describes indications of current activity on a data being displayed on the small scale representation (see: e.g., "currently viewing" at Col. 4, lines 65-68; "updated as changes occur" at Col. 5, lines 14-18; "during that activity" at Col. 7, line 12; "performing an activity" at Col. 7, line 47; "currently accessing" at Col. 7, line 52; "[w]hen activity affecting the shared data begins to occur...[and] as more activity affecting the shared data occurs" at Col. 8, lines 2-5 and

lines 13-17). Stefik does not indicate "read", "not read" or "changed".

Applicant respectfully asserts that Stefik does not teach or suggest display of user access status indicating whether each particular user has read each document, wherein the user access status indication is one of "read", "not read", and "changed" for each user of each document. Rather, Stefik provides an indication when some activity related to the shared data is currently occurring. Moreover, the current activity indicated by some altered display of the Stefik icon is not provided for every user of the document. Applicant respectfully asserts that the Stefik displaying of an icon indicating that there is, or is not, current activity on a document does not anticipate displaying a status row bar with a user access status indication showing one of "read", "not read", and "changed" for each user of each groupware document, as is set forth in all of the claims as amended.

Stefik does suggest that the icon indication may include the identity of one or more users who are currently viewing the large-scale representation of shared data and/or the small-scale representations of the shared data (Col. 4, lines 65-68). However, such does not teach or suggest

providing an indication of the user access status for every user as to whether they have read a document (i.e., "read", "not read", or "changed"). If a user is currently "viewing" the small-scale representation of a document, there is no way in the Stefik system of determining whether that user has viewed the large-scale representation (i.e., whether that user has read the document). It only means that the user is not currently viewing the document. Stefik does not provide steps or means for displaying user access status indications for all users of all documents, as is claimed.

Stefik also teaches that the "identity of the user performing an activity relating to shared data may also be helpful" (Col. 7, lines 46-48). However, that teaching simply means that the small-scale representation will indicate that there is current activity by the identified user. Again, such does not teach or suggest providing an indication of the user access status for every user as to whether they have read, not read, or changed a document. Stefik does not teach or suggest displaying user access status as defined by the present Specification and claims. Stefik displays data status, not user status. Moreover, Stefik does not display status of more than one user.

It is well established under U. S. Patent Law that, for a reference to anticipate claim language under 35 USC 102, that reference must teach each and every claim feature. Anticipation under 35 USC 102 is established only when a single prior art reference discloses each and every element of a claimed invention. See: In re Schreiber, 128 F. 3d 1473, 1477, 44 USPQ2d 1429, 1431 (Fed. Cir. 1997); In re Paulsen, 30 F. 3d 1475, 1478-1479, 31 USPQ2d 1671, 1673 (Fed. Cir. 1994); In re Spada, 911 F. 2d 705, 708, 15 USPQ2d 1655, 1657 (Fed. Cir. 1990) and RCA Corp. v. Applied Digital Data Sys., Inc., 730 F. 2d 1440, 1444, 221 USPQ 385, 388 (Fed. Cir. 1984). Since the Stefik patent does not teach maintaining, updating and displaying user access status indicating one of "read", "not read" and "changed" for each document for every one of a plurality of users of groupware, it cannot be maintained that the Stefik patent anticipates the invention as recited in independent Claims 1, 6, and 10 and those claimed which depend therefrom.

With specific reference to Claim 3 and Claim 13, Applicant disagrees with the Examiner's interpretation of the teachings from Cols. 7 and 8 of Stefik. The cited passage from Col. 7, line 65 through Col. 8, line 20 refer to an indication of the "extent of activity affecting the

shared data". The cited passage does not anticipate the claim language of indicting what percentage of users of each group have read each document.

Regarding Claims 5, the Examiner concludes that Stefik teaches the user status indication as claimed. Applicant reiterates that Stefik displays a data indicator not a user access status indication and that Stefik's teachings at Col. 7, lines 37-43 may suggest the use of colors or patterns (i.e., shading) but do not teach a status row bar with user access status indications of "read", "not read" and "changed" for each user of each document.

With regard to Claims 15-16, Applicant agrees that Stefik teaches input devices and screens; however, Applicant maintains that Stefik does not teach those components in an apparatus for carrying out a method of indicating user access status as claimed.

In rejecting Claims 4 and 14, the Examiner additionally cites the Burgess patent. The Burgess patent is directed to a system and method for a single user to check whether or not he has read a file. Burgess provides a user bitmap which comprises a snapshot of each file with a bitmap code (i.e., a file status indicator) which tells the user whether or not he has read a file. The Burgess user can only view

file status for his own files. Since Stefik only teaches indicating data status which shows that data are currently being accessed, it would not be logical to modify Stefik with Burgess' teachings regarding whether the single user has read the data. If Burgess's user is currently accessing the data, that user does not require a snapshot of the data to tell him that he is reading the data. Further, Applicant respectfully asserts that Burgess neither teaches nor suggests that when the documents are divided into document groups, each of which consists of a plurality of documents, a method further comprises displaying a document group status indication showing whether at least one of the documents in each document group has not been read for each document group, as recited in Claims 4 and 14. Applicant concludes that the combination of teachings of Stefik and Burgess do not obviate the language of Claims 4 and 14.

The Examiner has additionally cited the Salas and Peters patents in rejecting the language of the remaining claims which depend from Claims 1, 6 and 10. Applicant respectfully asserts that none of the cited references teaches or suggests those claim features which are missing from the Stefik patent, as further detailed below.

Applicant relies on the discussion of Stefik provided above, and will not repeat all of the arguments.

The Salas patent is directed to tracking user access to shareware, which is available to users for testing and/or demonstration. Salas teaches, in the cited passage from Col. 5, lines 43-49, that an item box will include an item's version, indicating whether an item has been changed. There is nothing in the Salas teachings that states or suggests that the Salas system automatically tracks, updates, and displays/notifies users of changes. Nor is there any teaching or suggestion in Salas that user access status is maintained for every one of a plurality of individual users. Rather, when shareware is posted for access by users, it is posted with an item box that indicates its version, etc. as input by the individual who updated and posted the shareware. Newly posted shareware is necessarily "not read" by any user. Its item box shows document status, "not read by any user", since it is new. It does not indicate individual user access status with respect to the new version. With regard to the cited passage from Col. 12, lines 31-37, Salas teaches that a user may interact with or modify the shareware. Salas does not teach, however, that information in the item box is altered when a user interacts

with or modifies the shareware. While Salas provides group, or team, access to a single user document, Salas provides no teaching or suggestion of a system or method for maintaining user access status for the document for every user of the team. Further Salas provides no teaching or suggestion of a system or method for displaying user access status for multiple users of multiple document, wherein the user access status is viewable by every user of the team. Even if one were to attempt to modify Stefik with Salas, one would arrive at a system wherein data status would be displayed, either as currently being viewed/updated or no currently being viewed/updated. The combination would not, however, have any capability of determining what other users had accessed the document, let alone a capability to display user access status for every user. Applicant concludes, therefore, that the combination of Stefik and Salas does not obviate the claim language of Claims 8, 9, and 12.

The Peters patent is cited against Claims 9 and 17 for its teachings related to showing what percentage of users have read a document and for sending reminders to users who have not read a document. Peters neither teaches nor suggests that the system maintain user access status for each document for every user of groupware and that the

system display that user access status for viewing by all of the users of the groupware. The Examiner has concluded that "Peters...teaches the system tracks users responses and can be used to send reminders to those who have not responded to prompt action from a few more users." Applicant fails to see how tracking user responses teaches or suggests tracking user access status. If a user accesses a document, but does not generate a response to it, neither Peters nor Stefik provides any way to maintain, update or display that information. The language of Claims 9 and 17 expressly call for a mail generation component to send mail to members of a group who have not read a document. Since none of the cited patents teach tracking user read/access status for document for all members of a group, Applicant fails to see how the combination would obviate the invention as claimed. The Salas indication of a version number is not notification. Moreover, even though Peters can send mail to non-responding members, such is not related to reading/accessing but rather to responding. Clearly the combination would not obviate the claim language. Applicant concludes, therefore, that the combination of Stefik and Peters, with or without the addition of the Salas patent teachings, does not obviate the invention as claimed in Claims 9 and 17.

For a determination of obviousness, the prior art must teach or suggest all of the claim limitations. "All words in a claim must be considered in judging the patentability of that claim against the prior art" (*In re Wilson*, 424 F. 2d 1382, 1385, 165 USPQ 494, 496 (C.C.P.A. 1970). If the cited references fail to teach each and every one of the claim limitations, a *prima facie* case of obviousness has not been established by the Examiner. Applicant contends that the Examiner has not established a *prima facie* case of obviousness against the claims since the not one of the cited references teaches or suggests the provision of a status row bar showing a user access status indication comprising one of "read", "not read", and "changed" for all users of all documents.

Based on the amendments and remarks, Applicant respectfully requests entry of the amendments, reconsideration of the amended claim language, withdrawal of the rejections, and allowance of the claims.

Respectfully submitted,
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